



**Tudhoe Learning Trust**

# **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

**Approved by:** Trust Chief Executive Officer

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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Recording Attendance Data</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Registers</li><li>• Amendments to the attendance register</li><li>• Computerised Data</li></ul>	
<b>Absence</b>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Covid-19</li><li>• Authorised Absence</li><li>• Unauthorised Absence</li><li>• Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children away during term time</li></ul>	
<b>Punctuality</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Monitoring attendance and responding to patterns of absence</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Supporting the reintegration of pupils after extended absences</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Taking Pupils off Roll</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Encouraging good attendance and punctuality</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Communicating with parents</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Further information</b>	<b>6</b>

## Introduction

Tudhoe Learning Trust seeks to ensure that all of its pupils receive a full education, which maximises the opportunities for inclusion and achievement at school so that each pupil is able to realise their full potential.

All children between the ages of 5 and 11 are legally required to be educated.

Pupils, parents and carers, teachers, support staff and governors all have a role in maintaining a high standard of attendance and punctuality.

***EVERY LESSON COUNTS! EVEN CASUAL ABSENCE CAN AFFECT***

***CHILDRENS ATTAINMENT.***

This policy should be read in conjunction with DFE improving school attendance guidance which can be found at [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)

### **Aims of the Policy**

To improve and maintain the overall attendance of pupils at school.

To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for all people involved in maintaining pupil attendance and punctuality.

To implement a system of sanctions and rewards.

To develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and responding to attendance data.

## Recording Attendance Data

### **Registers**

The registers are completed by 9.00 a.m. at the beginning of the morning and 1.15 p.m. for the afternoon session, and are returned to the office within 10 minutes, when the registers close.

A mark / (**a.m.**) and \ (**p.m.**) is used to indicate present and red circles are used to indicate absence and lateness.

All authorised absences must have the correct code entered with an explanation. The codes are provided in each register.

All lateness must be marked with an L and the time. If a pupil arrives after the register closes without an acceptable explanation, it is marked with a U and is considered as an unauthorised absence.

Where a pupil is absent for circumstances relating to coronavirus, code X should be used.

If mistakes are made when making an entry on the register, a note should be made indicating which entry is correct.

## **Tippex and pencil must not be used.**

If a staff member other than the class teacher receives information about attendance or lateness, they are to inform the office staff.

## **Amendments to the Attendance Register**

Every amendment made to the attendance register will include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

## **Computerised Data**

The information in the registers will be entered regularly onto the computer by the office staff and will be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

## **Absence**

If a pupil is absent for any reason, parents or carers are required to contact the school office on the first day of absence giving reason for the absence.

If there is no call from a parent or carer, the school will phone home to inform the parent or carer that the pupil is not in school and enquire why.

## **Covid-19**

If a pupil, or a member of their household, has one or more of the following symptoms:

- A high temperature - feeling hot to the touch on back or chest
- A new continuous cough - coughing a lot for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in a 24 hour period (for those that usually have a cough, this may be worse than usual)
- A loss of change to sense of smell or taste - you cannot smell or taste anything or things smell or taste differently to normal.

You are no longer required to do a Covid-19 rapid lateral flow test if you have symptoms, but if you or your child have tested positive for Covid-19

- try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for a further 3 days after your positive test if you are under 18 years
- try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for a further 5 days after your positive test if you are 18 or over
- avoid meeting people who are more likely to get seriously ill from viruses, such as people with a weakened immune system, for a further 10 days after your positive test

Where a test result is negative, the pupil can return to school.

Where a pupil has symptoms at school, the school will follow the safety measures set out by government and parents/carers will be contacted to arrange for the pupil to be collected.

Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides.

### **Authorised Absence**

An authorised absence is when a pupil is away for a reason acceptable to the school. The school (not the parent/carer) determines whether an absence is authorised after receipt of a verbal or written explanation from the parent/carer. Explanations from pupils or siblings are not sufficient.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

The school will follow up on all unauthorised absences, communicating parental responsibility for providing explanations. This is to ascertain the reason for the absence, ensure that proper safeguarding action is taken as appropriate and identify whether the absence is approved or not. The school may follow up via one or all of the following methods:-

- Unauthorised absence letter
- Phone call home
- Text to contact number provided

### **Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children away during term time.**

Special leave of absence can be authorised at the Head Teacher's discretion. Longer periods of absence may only be authorised in very exceptional circumstances.

Any leave of absence for medical appointment or religious observance will go to the child's teacher. If a parent/carer feels it is absolutely unavoidable to take their child out of school for leave of absence, they must complete an absence request form, in advance, for consideration by the Head Teacher.

Any special leave of absence which including a request for a child to be out of school for over 1 day can only be authorised by the Head Teacher. Each case will be considered individually based on the nature of the event, history of term time absences, the pupil's current attendance, age, achievement, and the time of year with respect to the curriculum. Parents will be informed in writing of the decision on their request.

Any time taken without the school's authorisation, or any additional time taken over and above the amount authorised will be recorded as unauthorised absence. If a pupil does not return on the agreed date, the school will make every effort to contact the family by telephone and in writing. If no contact is made, or if the absence has been extended for anything other than unavoidable circumstances, the school will refer the family to Education Welfare Service (EWS) if they do not return within 10 school days. If no contact is made with the family by EWS then a letter will be sent to parent/carer informing them that the pupil has been taken off roll, this will always be done in consultation with EWS.

### **Punctuality**

School starts at 8.55 a.m. It is expected that all pupils arrive in good time. If pupils arrive after 9.05 they will be marked as late. Lateness is monitored using Arbor regularly and discussed with EWS.

A late letter will automatically be sent to parents/carers if there is regular lateness. All unauthorised late pupils (those after the register closes) will be treated as absences.

## **Monitoring Attendance and Responding to Patterns of Absence**

School staff will respond when a pattern of low attendance emerges.

The school is responsible for initial interventions. When a pattern of poor attendance emerges, a discussion is needed between the class teacher and school management to determine a course of action.

If a class teacher makes initial contact with a parent and there is no improvement, school management must be informed and will arrange to contact a parent/carer. If there is still no improvement after suitable interventions by the school, the EWO may become involved.

Although all cases are considered individually, the EWS will generally become involved when a pupil's attendance falls below 75% in one term.

To ensure that all patterns of low attendance are identified, the education welfare officer will meet with the school's named attendance person (usually a member of senior management) each half term to discuss and agree a course of action for all pupils with attendance under 90%. The agreed action may include:

- Closely monitoring the situation
- A letter from the school
- A meeting with the school (possibly with EWS present)
- A formal referral to EWS (which can include home visits, referrals to outside agencies and statutory action)

A series of standard letters are available to be sent to parents. These will be sent out by the school.

## **Supporting the Reintegration of Pupils After Extended Absences**

All pupils who return to school after an extended period of absence need to be supported. Each case will be considered individually and a plan will be drawn up to best support the pupil's academic and social reintegration into the school.

## **Taking Pupils off Roll**

All pupils who leave to attend another school (except for secondary school transfers) will remain on roll until their admission elsewhere is confirmed. In the case of pupils who disappear (i.e. leave with no indication of where they are going or whether they will return), the school will make every effort to contact the family on the telephone and in writing. If contact cannot be established, the school will make a formal referral to EWS.

## **Encouraging Good Attendance and Punctuality**

Whole school activities will raise the profile of attendance and punctuality through:

- Newsletters
- Certificates for 100% attendance for each academic year

## Communicating with Parents

It is essential the parents/carers of all pupils understand the school's attendance policy and their role in ensuring their child has good attendance. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their children arrive at school on time each day. Parents/carers must contact the school in person or on the telephone to provide an explanation on the first day their child is absent.

Further information is available from the Trust Office via [office@tudhoelearningtrust.co.uk](mailto:office@tudhoelearningtrust.co.uk)